

ABSTRACT

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The present invention overcomes the problems in the existing art described above by providing an online digital video signal transfer apparatus and method. Rental of the digital video signals occurs within an online environment including one or more client computers and at least one network server connected by a communications link to the one or more client computers. The method includes providing access to an online catalog stored within a memory of a network video server computer. The online catalog includes information regarding digital video signals available for rental from the network server computer. Requests are then received from client computers for rental of digital video signals selected from the online catalog for a specified period of time. The requests include electronic payment based on the selected digital video signal and the specified period of time. Once electronic payment is provided, the digital video signal is transmitted to the client computer via communications link. Once transmitted, the digital video signal is viewable by a user of the client computer during the specified period of time. Advantages of the invention include the ability to rent motion pictures without having to provide additional monies for purchase of the motion pictures. In addition, the present invention provides an interface that simulates the actual rental of motion pictures within a video rental store. Moreover, during the specified period of rental, the user is allowed to view the motion picture as many times as desired, thereby simulating the actual rental of video cassettes or DVDs of feature length motion pictures.